Title: **Why the Mexican Oyster Fishery in the Gulf of Mexico Is Underdeveloped?**

Authors: César Arias de León, ICIMAP. Universidad Veracruzana (Mexico)
Virgilio Arenas Fuentes, ICIMAP. Universidad Veracruzana (Mexico)
Fabiola Lango-Reynoso, Instituto Tecnologico de Boca del Río (Mexico)
Marco L. Unzueta Bustamante, Instituto Nacional de Pesca (Mexico)
Juan C. Zamorano Morfín, SEDARPA. Pesca y Acuacultura (Mexico)

Abstract: The Mexican Oyster fishery in the Gulf of Mexico annually produces only 50,000 MT, 95% of Mexico oyster production. Oyster production has fallen drastically in most coastal lagoons, this decline has been attributed to factors as overfishing, mismanagement of natural oyster beds, environmental degradation and lagoons pollution. This work proposes strategies for oyster fishery management on Gulf of Mexico littoral. In order to achieve this goal oyster fishery diagnose for Tamaulipas, Veracruz, Tabasco and Campeche states were made for evaluation of ecological, economics, legal and social aspects trough information sources as statistical yearbooks, databases, and published information relative to regional oyster fishery, simultaneously visits to landing places where made and inquiries to production units, directives, fishermen and decision makers were done. Collected information was grouped and analyzed with SWOT analysis. Oyster fishery is carried on in 20 coastal ecosystems where works 51 production units with 2,955 active oyster fishermen. In every visited site were observed water pollution, coastal deforestation and or overfishing. National and international oysters markets cannot grow for several reasons including sanitary quality; there are no efficient models for oyster beds administration, no infrastructure for give oyster products additional value. Some of the strategies for solve these difficulties are, to make local diagnosis and promote social organization for control of water quality, market research for oyster products and laboratory seed production, register efficiently and responsibly catch statistics, to make official norms on size catch, fishing gear, fishing, reception, packing, commercialization, culture techniques, and cultured oyster sizes, these strategies and other programs may permit sustainable and biotechnological development in oyster fishery.